Book review

Credibility Assessment: Scientific Research and Applications, David Raskin (Ed.). Charles Honts and John Kircher Academic Press (2014).

This comprehensive guide offers seven chapter describing the latest developments in the detection of deception, with a strong focus on the scientific evidence that supports these. Inspired by Murray Kleiner's 2001 book *Handbook of Polygraph Testing*, the current volume includes chapters on each of the common approaches to lie detection, and locates the importance of this in the post 9–11, global political climate. The editors have recruited a pool of international experts to write about their specific areas of expertise, including members of the Utah group who have led the field in polygraph research, and the University of Portsmouth's Aldert Vrij who has researched extensively the theories underpinning deception and lie detection from a psychological perspective.

Each chapter emphasises the need for evidence-based approaches to lie detection. Our inability to accurately assess the veracity of an individual's presentation is stressed over and again; this is contrasted with the, 'normality,' of lying and the fact that we all, necessarily, get quite good at deceiving others. As is the case in others areas of forensic practice it seems that the only thing our, 'relevant experience,' adds to the ability to detect deception by those of us who work with offenders is that we become more confident in our equally inaccurate judgements. The importance of a scientific systematic approach to this is clear.

The book summarises the most recent developments and approaches in lie detection; physiological approaches based on polygraph, ocular metrics and Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) techniques; verbal approaches, including the Strategic Use of Evidence (SUE) and reading techniques; and non-verbal approaches, including those that have been employed at portals in response to the 9–11 terrorist attacks. The evidence that supports and refutes each of these is presented in a clear and comprehensive manner. The importance of selecting appropriate interviewing strategies is a common theme shared across the different approaches. Each research team acknowledges the limitations in the current state of the science and the need for further research and development is echoed throughout.

The highlights for me as a psychologist included chapters on the Strategic Use of Evidence technique (Maria Hartwig, Par Anders Granhag and Timothy Luke), the neural basis of deception using a cognitive neuroscience perspective (Ray Johnson), and on theories of deception and lie detection (Aldert Vrij and Giorgio Ganis). I was also interested in the chapter on countermeasures in which Charles Honts reviewed strategies that have been employed by individuals attempting to thwart technology based credibility assessments. I would recommend this book to all who are involved in the assessment of veracity; be it in a clinical, forensic or other related setting. The risks associated with the use of techniques that are either not accurate or ill-employed are stressed throughout. The material is presented clearly and is accessible; this book provides a comprehensive up-to-date examination of the important empirical findings in this area.

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